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MEMORIAL CEREMONIES

ON THE OCCASION OF

DECORATING THE GRAVES

OF

THE FEDERAL DEAD,

AT

MAGNOLIA CEMETERY,

MAY 29TH, 1869,

Grand Army of the Republic - Dept of S. C.
Under the Auspices of Post No. 1, G. A. R., of Charleston, S. C.

CHARLESTON, S. C.:
REPUBLICAN JOB OFFICE,
CORNER MARKET AND MEETING STREETS.
1869.

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COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES

AT

MAGNOLIA CEMETERY, CHARLESTON,

MAY 29, 1869.

On the receipt of General Orders No. 21, Headquarters Grand Army of the Republic, setting apart a day to decorate the graves of the Federal dead, and to commemorate their glorious deeds, Post No. 1, of Charleston, began preparations to carry out its patriotic instructions. Every comrade of the Post became at once interested, and all were determined to spare no effort to make the occasion worthy alike of the dead and of the grand organization which had taken upon itself the sacred duty of commemoration.

A committee of arrangements was appointed, composed of some of the most active members of the Post, and a number of patriotic ladies, on being invited, consented to assist in the preparations and to participate in the ceremonies. These ladies formed themselves into a committee, with Mrs. L. T. Potter as president, and busied themselves for several days in arranging wreaths, mottoes, and various floral devices, entering with great spirit and heartiness into everything tending to the success of the celebration.

The remains of the Union soldiers who died in Charleston and its neighborhood, numbering about three hundred, have been gathered together and interred in a neat lot in Magnolia Cemetery. Here the ceremonies were to be performed, and the 29th of May was fixed upon as the day most suitable and convenient. The programme was arranged as follows:

"Commander N. K. Reed is charged with the management, and will be assisted by the subordinate officers and comrades of the Post.

"The exercises, commencing at four o'clock, P. M., near the Cemetery Chapel, will be in the following order: 1. Reading the order of the Commander-in-Chief, by Commander N. K. Reed; 2. Prayer by the Chaplain of the Post, Rev. A. Webster; 3. Singing; 4. Short addresses by his Honor the Mayor, Hon. D. T. Corbin, Hon. D. H. Chamberlain, Hon. A. J. Ransier, General Wm. Gurney, Rev. Mr. Adams, and J. M. Morris, Esq.; 5. Singing; 6. Decorating the graves; 7. Prayer; 8. Benediction."

Some changes were subsequently necessarily made in the programme, but the order of exercises was maintained.

The arrival of the day found all the arrangements complete. The weather was very fine, and long before the hour of opening crowds began to assemble at the scene of the ceremonies. In a vacant portion of the soldiers' lot a commodious stand had been erected for the speakers and others. This was draped with the national colors and festooned with wreaths of evergreen and flowers. Over the entrance, in moss letters neatly wrought, was the inscription, "We honor those who died that the nation might live."

The members of the Grand Army, each wearing a rosette, or knot of red, white and blue ribbons on his left breast, being formed in front of the stand, Commander N. K. Reed, of Post No. 1, opened the exercises by reading the order of the Commander-in-Chief as follows:

HEADQUARTERS GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., April 12, 1869.

GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 21.

I. The 30th day of May proximo—a day set apart by the Grand Army of the Republic to commemorate the glorious deeds of our departed comrades—will be observed throughout the United States in such manner as befits the solemnities of the occasion, and as will testify the undying love of a grateful people for the memory of those who died that the nation might live.

This is the second public observance of the occasion, which it is trusted will recur yearly while there remains a heart loyal to the cause in which our comrades fell, and while the moving principle of that struggle is worth preserving. If our organization had no other object, that alone of keeping green the resting-places of our nation's defenders, by this annual commemoration, would be motive enough to hold us together in a fraternal band.

The Commander-in-Chief desires to thank those patriotic men and women who gave their aid and sympathy on a former occasion to make successful this National Memorial Day, and they are cordially invited to unite with the comrades of the Grand Army in the approaching ceremonies; and he thanks the loyal press everywhere, through whose generous aid a lasting record has been made of the observances one year ago. To the Congress of the United States, the comrades are specially indebted for authorizing the publication, in book form, of the proceedings of last May, and for the promise held out that each year a compilation will be made and published as a national recognition of sympathy with these memorial observances.

II. It has been determined not to prescribe any form of ceremony for universal observance, but each Post, or any number of Posts, may arrange together such fitting services as circumstances will permit. Department Commanders will use every effort to perfect arrangements for the occasion. The newspaper press are requested to give publication to this order.

III. Department and Post Commanders are specially enjoined to preserve and forward to these Headquarters a copy of the proceedings (in printed form, so far as possible), which take place in carrying out this order.

IV. As the 30th of May occurs on Sabbath, Posts are at liberty to observe either that day, or Saturday, the 29th.

By order of

JOHN A. LOGAN, *Commander-in-Chief.*

N. P. CHIPMAN, *Adjutant-General.*

The following prayer was then offered by Chaplain Webster:

PRAYER.

O Lord our God, we adore Thee in view of the perfections of Thy being and the continued exhibitions of Thy mercy towards us. As we assemble here to attend to these solemn services, and pay our respect to the memory of the honored dead, we are reminded of our dependence upon Thee for our personal and national existence. We thank Thee that we are permitted to live, although surrounded with the monuments that mark the resting-place of the dead. We thank Thee that Thou hast deeply implanted within us a love for home and country, and hast been pleased to give and preserve unto us these inestimable blessings. We praise Thee that when sectional strife and political partisanship had fanned the flames of war that burst suddenly upon the nation there were found those who, with strong arms and patriotic hearts, were willing to peril their lives on sea and land in defence of our national banners; and when the throes of this terrible struggle were shaking the fair fabric of our free institutions to their foundations, Thou didst give victory to our national arms, and the flag we love floats again in honored triumph on the land and sea. But we are painfully reminded that in this effort for our national defence many gave their lives for their country, and now sleep their last sleep.

May Thy watchful providence be over the ceremonies of this day; and as we strew our floral offerings on the turf that covers the mortal remains of fallen heroes, may it be with hearts that throb with grateful emotions, which these beautiful mementoes may indicate, but in their frailty do not typify. As their noble deeds shall be chronicled in history and embalmed in song, may they have a record more glorious and enduring upon the hearts of a great, united and prosperous nation. May their memory ever be as fresh and vernal as the wreaths and flowers we this day bring to adorn the place of their quiet slumbers; and while the nation endures, may we have tears and garlands for the shrines of those who bravely died for its honor, glory and perpetuity.

O Lord, we ask thy blessing upon the widows and orphans of those who fell in this recent fearful struggle for the rights of humanity and the safety of the republic. Be Thou to them the widows' God and a father to the fatherless, and may they be the cherished objects of national gratitude and protection. Bless our army and navy, and all those who fought for the republic and have been spared to outlive the perils of the conflict. May they have wisdom to make permanent in peace the blessings for which they so nobly fought in war. Bless the President of these United States and each department and officer of our National and State Governments. Be Thou our national defence—our God, as Thou wast the God of our fathers. May our flag be loved and honored on the sea and land; may the priceless blessing of peace extend over our whole country, hush all sectional strife, and assuage the asperity of party feeling. Bless our enemies, whether at home or abroad, and give them the spirit of true penitence for their sins against Thee and the rights of humanity. May all of us be enabled so to fight life's great battle that we may be more

than conquerors through Him who hath loved us and given himself for us, and be fitted to sit down together in the kingdom of God, to go no more out forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

His Honor Mayor Pillsbury, Hon. D. T. Corbin, Hon. A. J. Ransier, General William Gurney and Hon. D. H. Chamberlain followed with brief addresses, some of which we are unable to furnish, because of the absence of the speakers, and having no copies of their remarks.

MAYOR PILLSBURY'S ADDRESS.

My Friends and Fellow-citizens: We have gathered at this consecrated spot, in the declining hours of this beautiful summer day, to perform a sad, but sacred duty, at the graves of our deceased Union soldiers.

It was only the other day that a scene similar to this occurred over yonder, where rest the remains of the Confederate dead. I have said that scene was similar to this; but there was this difference: there, the footsteps around those graves were perhaps more gentle and tender, because they were the footsteps of father, mother, wife, brother, sister and lover; and the flowers, as they fell upon those mounds with sweet perfume, were bathed in only such tears as affection for kindred can bestow.

On this occasion it is otherwise. Scarcely a relative of those who lie here is present, to exhibit to us the tenderness of consanguineous affection for them while they lived, or the depths of grief for kindred, now that they are lost and buried.

Many of the head-boards are marked "Unknown," even; while the others only indicate the name, the company and regiment to which the sleeper beneath belonged. This is simply all we can know. But they are not "unknown" or unremembered everywhere. Every grave tells us there is a desolate fireside, or a vacant chair somewhere, and that the eternal absence of each of these is by somebody felt and mourned.

But although most, if not all of us gathered here, are strangers to those whose memories we have met to cherish, still we are bound to this spot by a sort of mystic tie that cannot be broken. We remember the old flag under which the buried soldiers so often and so gallantly rallied. We love the government for which they not only periled but sacrificed their lives, and though strangers, we are in tears.

But what lessons shall we learn from the scene before us? First. That the love of liberty and reverence for country are worth the sacrifice of even life itself. And then I was thinking over, and contrasting the life with the death of those who sleep both here and over yonder. In life, they may have ranked as enemies; some of them may have faced each other in the deadly conflict, and may have fallen in the bitter strife. But how is it in death? How peacefully and quietly their bodies repose, and in such close proximity! And, after falling in battle, or wasting away in hostile camp or hospital, if the matchless love of a common Saviour then welcomed them to a common heaven, how soon all enmity ceased forever! Together they at once joined in the same song of sweetest harmony, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain for us all, for He has redeemed us from all our sins and sorrows. Such, doubtless, is the treaty of peace, signed, ratified and welcomed in heaven by those who fell in the struggle, which, though discordant, and whether right or wrong, was no doubt dear to those who contended. Such being the case, cannot we who survive catch the inspiration which swells the chorus of those who, once estranged, are now forever glorified together? If this element of heaven could distil to earth, and permeate from heart to heart, soon all our discords would cease; and although the bit-

terness engendered by war and its desolating results may have separated and estranged us, we should all become friends again. Who, then, can resist so glorious a consummation? While, therefore, we each fondly cherish the memory of our dead, let us strive to harmonize the living. Forgetting, as far as possible, the darkness through which we have passed, and the sorrowful, disturbing causes which have divided us, let us endeavor to look forward to a peaceful, prosperous future, when swords shall have been beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall no more learn to war against each other.

Ladies and gentlemen, and comrades in arms of the fallen, in the arrangements which you have made for this national anniversary, it seems to me that you have done all that affection and patriotism could suggest. The display of the old national banner indicates that your devotion to the old government is the same that actuated those who fell for its defence. And in the profusion of flowers here exhibited, with other decorations, it seems to me you have robbed death of some of its terrors, and the grave of some of its gloom. If the vision of the friends of those who lie buried here could extend to what is occurring here to-day, methinks they would rejoice, not only that their sons and brothers fell in a glorious cause, but that their bodies repose in the midst of friends who will forever carefully watch and guard their sacred dust.

ADDRESS OF HON. A. J. RANSIER.

Gentlemen of the Grand Army of the Republic and Fellow-citizens: It is with feelings of melancholy pleasure that I join, by request of your committee, in the ceremonies of this hour.

You have come here, ladies and gentlemen, to do honor to the memories of departed worth; you have come to lay floral offerings upon mounds beneath which are encased the mortal remains of men who gave up their lives for a principle—for the government of their fathers, united and indivisible.

It is meet and proper that you should do this. Civilization has had its martyrs in most all countries where it has put its foot, and their memories live through ages. That these men are martyrs, in the loftiest sense of the term, there is no doubt in my mind. They offered themselves a willing sacrifice upon the altar of their country, and in defence of those God-given principles of society and government that underlie our governmental fabric.

Those mounds before me suggest ideas and thoughts which furnish matter for the historian, and upon which the intelligent mind might dwell for hours. For me, I must content myself with a word or two, and in them, too, I am admonished to be brief, that you may *do* that for which you have come here. Their remains rest in "*peace,*" and far from those who wept, and no doubt often weep in silence and in sorrow because they are gone. How suggestive, how painfully suggestive, is the awful word upon yonder tablet, "Unknown." Yes, they were to us unknown, and the places where they lie are, perhaps, unknown to those most dear to them in life; but they are not unknown to fame, to history. Their deeds are emblazoned on the escutcheon of their country and remembered by a grateful people. Come not only on specific occasions to strew your flowers, but come whenever opportunity affords; bring your trowels and your spades, and keep fresh the earth and flowers over them. Remember, fellow-citizens, the cause for which they died has triumphed, and they are laid side by side as they fought, regardless of nationality, birth or color, coming from all sections of the country—typical of the benefits and privileges now secured to every American citizen.

GENERAL GURNEY'S ADDRESS.

Comrades and Fellow-citizens: The custom which has arisen since the war, of decorating the graves of those who fell in the defence of their country, bespeaks and is an evidence of the highest civilization, and does honor alike to the living and the dead. We have assembled to-day in the discharge of this high and holy duty. We come to moisten with tears of affection and kind remembrance, and to decorate with flowers and evergreens the graves of our honored dead. We would here recall to mind their heroic deeds and devotion to duty, and hold them up as bright examples for future generations.

We come to venerate that self-sacrificing spirit which they ever manifested in the hour of danger and peril—even in the hour of death—and offer a fitting tribute to their memory.

Here, in this beautiful "City of the Dead," they rest from their labors, and their ashes mingle with our mother earth. No more are they disturbed by the sound of bugle or drum. No more will they tread the lonely beat of the sentinel, nor be wearied by the midnight march. Never again will they be equipped and mustered for war.

> "They sleep their last sleep, they have fought their last battle,
> No sound can awake them to glory again."

Here, around us, in that peace which the world cannot give, sleep our honored dead. The sunshine and storm pass over them unheeded. "After life's fitful fever they sleep well;" and although no marble slab or column mark their resting-place, their memory will live in the hearts and affections of the American nation as long as time lasts. For, nowhere in the annals of history can be found recorded, greater valor, patriotism and devotion to duty than that manifested by the citizen soldiers of the republic. In the hour of their country's peril, at the crisis of our broken and bereaved America, and while the old flag of the Union—that star-decked emblem of our national liberty—was being trailed in the dust, they came forth from the quiet pursuits of civil life to arm and equip for the contest, leaving father, mother, wife and kindred, and zealously applied themselves to the task of learning and teaching the art of war.

By the cruel fate of war, many, very many of our comrades were cut down in the prime and vigor of youth. Death overtook some upon the bloody field, and others in the hospital or tent. In either case they were called to pass through the "valley of the shadow of death" without the consolation of loved ones at home; no loving and affectionate wife, mother or sister by their side to console them with affection's kiss. But, in the language of the poet,

> "There is a tear for all that die,
> A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
> But nations swell the funeral cry,
> And triumph weeps above the brave."

We meet to-day to do honor to those whose remains lie in this beautiful Magnolia Cemetery. We wish to say to the world to-day, through these services, that we have not forgotten, yea, that we wish to keep in constant remembrance those of our number who fell a sacrifice upon the altar of our country.

We remember, also, that in these same grounds lie, side by side as it were, soldiers of both armies of the late war—the ashes of both silently and peacefully mingling with each other. The same gentle breeze fans their verdant covering. The same

rain and dew moisten the earth and give vigor and vitality alike to the roses that bloom at the head of the graves of each. The same sun casts its genial warmth and light upon them by day. The same arched heavens are above them, and its starry eyes keep watch by night. "In the grave all fallacies are detected, all ranks are leveled and all distinctions are done away." Between these brave men there is no longer strife; but eloquently do they speak from their graves—the dead speaking to the living—in the beautiful spirit of the Gospel: "Peace on earth and good will to men."

It has been truly said, "Dead men win battles." The integrity, patriotism and noble daring of the soldier, as do the good deeds of all men (goodness being immortal), live forever—

"And freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead,
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fell in her array."

Let us remember, then, that our services to-day are of no avail, except as their influence is reflected upon the living. By no act of ours can we change the destinies of the dead. We leave them in the hands of the All-Wise and good Father, "who doeth all things well."

And as we decorate these graves with flowers and evergreens, emblems of love and immortality, in commemoration of their good deeds, let us also extend our sympathies to their loved ones in distant homes.

Be it ours, fellow-comrades and fellow-citizens, to emulate the virtues, patriotism and devotion to duty that speak out so eloquently from the slumbers of those who inhabit this consecrated place.

"Bring fairest garlands and tenderly tread
Over the graves of our patriot dead;
Gently and lovingly place o'er each breast
Flowers that brighten the home of their rest.

"They poured out their life-blood like midsummer rain;
They washed from that banner its deadliest stain;
No *slave* clanks his fetters from ocean to sea,
And the home of the brave is the land of the free.

"Green be the turf where their ashes repose,
Fragrant with perfume of lily and rose;
Trees of the wild wood, your leafy arms wave,
Lovingly sheltering the volunteer's grave.

"Here let them slumber, where no dread alarms
Break on their rest with the drum beat to arms,
Till, at heaven's reveille, they burst from the sod,
To meet the 'well done' of the chosen of God."

When the speaking ended, the ladies and gentlemen who were appointed to decorate the graves repaired to the chapel, where they obtained the wreaths and other decorations. Supplied with these, they were formed into two ranks—the ladies on the right, each bearing a basket of choice flowers, the gentlemen on the left, holding on their arms the wreaths, etc. In

this way the procession emerged from the chapel, led by Commander Reed and Mrs. L. T. Potter, and, to the sound of solemn music, slowly marched up the winding path to the head of the line of graves, then filed to the right. As the procession passed down, each couple successively, in the manner of the tactical movement "on the right by file into line," wheeled out opposite a row of graves and began the work of decoration. This, perhaps, was the most impressive, as it was the most beautiful, part of the ceremonies, and it was viewed by many eyes through a mist of tears.

The exquisite taste which distinguishes woman, refined by the sad duty which called it forth on this occasion, was soon visible. The dry earth of the little mounds was hidden under a delicately-tinted embroidery of flowers, and a wreath of evergreens was placed at the head-board of each grave—presenting a picture pleasing alike to eye and soul. The graves marked "Unknown," it was noticed, were decked more elaborately, if possible, than the others.

The "strewing of flowers" concluded, the procession was reformed and marched up by the stand, when Dr. Webster read the following lines, composed for the occasion by Major Willoughby, of Post No. 1:

TO THE PATRIOT DEAD AT MAGNOLIA.

Slumber sweetly 'neath the roses,
  Comrades in the ended strife;
Faithful hearts have not forgotten
  Why ye yielded up your life.

Hushed the musket's volley'd rattle,
  Hushed the thunderous cannonade,
Ceased the work of torch and sabre,
  Ceased the devastating raid.

Tillage smooths the fields of slaughter,
  Bloodless is the streamlet's flow;
War is but a horrid vision
  Of the fever'd Long Ago.

Still, oh sleeping brave, the banner—
  Freedom's banner—floats on high,
Proud as when its image faded
  From your death-enshrouded eye—

Waves o'er all the land united,
  Emblem of the nation's power,
Grand memento of the martyrs
  Who have left it as their dower.

Here above their honored ashes—
Strengthened, though our tears will fall—
Pride appeases half our sorrow,
When their triumphs we recall.

Bend, oh skies, in peace above them—
Fresh, ye garlands, still remain—
Angels guard their dreamless slumbers—
Peace be with ye, gallant slain.

The exercises of the day were concluded by a short prayer from Rev. Mr. Brown, and the pronouncing of the benediction by Dr. Webster, after which the assemblage dispersed, evidently well pleased with the ceremonies, and doubtless with a deeper and holier affection for the flag in whose defence so many patriots had so freely given their lives.

His Honor Chief Justice Chase being in Charleston at the time of the celebration, the members of Post No. 1 deemed it respectful and proper to invite him to attend and participate in the ceremonies, and the adjutant was instructed to enclose an invitation to his Honor. The response of the Chief Justice was received too late to be included in the exercises at the cemetery. It is as follows:

CHARLESTON, S. C., May 29, 1869.

Dear Sir: Your note, inviting me to attend the ceremony of decorating, at the Magnolia Cemetery, the graves of the brave men who fell in defence of the Union during the recent civil war, only reached me this morning. I am very sorry that I cannot be with you on this most interesting occasion, but it is now too late to make the necessary arrangements. The nation cannot too tenderly cherish the memory of her dead heroes, or too watchfully guard the well-being of those who survive; and may we not indulge the hope that ere long we who adhered to the national cause will be prompt also to join in commemorating the heroism of our countrymen who fell on the other side, and that those who now specially mourn their loss, consenting to the arbitrament of arms, and resuming their old love for their country and our country, one and indivisible, will join with us in a like commemoration of the fallen brave of the army of the Union? The dead are not dead—they have only gone before, and now see eye to eye. Why may not we all borrow from their sacred graves oblivion of the past differences, and henceforth unite in noble and generous endeavor to assure the honor and welfare of our whole country—of all her States and of all her citizens?

(Signed) S. P. CHASE.

To Captain B. H. MANNING, and others.

The members of Post No. 1 desire to express their obligations to the following, whose services and kindness contributed largely to the success of the celebration, viz: To Mrs. L. T. Potter, President; Miss Hattie Holloway, Miss Mary Woods

and Miss M. E. Boutell, Vice-Presidents, and their fair assistants, for preparing the wreaths and other decorations and distributing them on the graves; to Mr. John Meade, who generously contributed his personal assistance and the use of his team for the occasion; to the Military and Quartermaster's Departments, for the flags, etc., and to the publishers of the South Carolina *Republican*, for inserting notices of the celebration without pay and for other assistance freely rendered.

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It seeks to promote better knowledge and better practice in plantation and farm management. Our articles on Agriculture are prepared with great care, and are crowded with important facts and practical suggestions. We get frequent letters from farmers opposed to us in politics, who say that our paper is the best paper in the State for farmers and planters. Domestic affairs, fashions and gossip for the fireside, have their place in our columns, and are treated with tasteful and thoughtful consideration of the interests and wants of women.

It gives careful consideration to Commercial and Manufacturing interests.

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